

SEPTEMBER 24, 1955

# DISNEY DAY IN *Levittown*





*AT THE LEVITTOWN STATION of the P.R.R. seven thousand children accompanied by their parents await Walt Disney's arrival.*

## THE DAY WALT DISNEY CAME TO LEVITTOWN

By Charles J. Hoye

**I**t was a great day! A beautiful Saturday afternoon in September! Poking his coonskin-capped head from the cab of the engine of a nine-car train which he himself piloted from New York's Pennsylvania station, was America's beloved Walt Disney, tugging on the whistle to

salute some 7,000 greeters at the Levittown-Tullytown PRR station.

Mr. Disneyland himself! Proud to no end that in America's newest and fastest growing city, some 300 school children had persuaded their school board to name the new Tullytown

T TOWN  
COMES  
T DISNEY



*PEERING FROM THE CAB of the locomotive that he had piloted from New York, Walt Disney smiles at the thousands of youngsters that turned out to welcome him. Colin Cho the school's official greeter waves excitedly to friends.*





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*One of the many T.V. news cameramen on hand for the gala occasion photographs some of the children waiting for a glimpse of Walt Disney.*

*A SMILING DISNEY clasps the hand of a youthful admirer during the motorcade that carried him through the Levittown-Tullytown area.*







*In one of the schools modern classrooms Walt Disney holds his young audience spellbound while reading lines from one of his world famous stories.*

school for him and patterned the layout of the school after his many Disneyland characters.

It was a day of memories which the children will carry forever. Colin Cho, sixth grade class president at the time and now a Delhaas High School freshman, especially will remember Disney.

Colin was chosen by his schoolmates to be the school's official greeter. The beaming Chinese boy was in his glory as he posed in the engine with Walt for the dozens of photographers, news reel men and Walt Disney's own movie makers.

Colin and the other boys and girls aren't the only ones with memories

of the occasion. Besides them and officials of the borough, the school district, the state, the county and surrounding towns, Disney himself took back to California a lot of memories.

He brought forth those memories a few weeks ago and right now the Walt Disney School awaits a check for \$500, the first of a series of annual grants from the Walt Disney Foundation. School officials expect the check will be presented soon in a Disney-arranged ceremony.

Walt Disney hasn't forgotten the children he met. He has tied one string to the grant. It can't be used just to lower the school budget. It has a specific purpose to buy curriculum material



*SINGING SONGS from some of the Disney movies, Linda Wurlpel and Susan Jacobs entertain Walt Disney in one of the school classrooms.*



*WALT DISNEY; shown in a thoughtful moment during ceremony dedicating the new Levittown School in his honor.*



*THIRD GRADE TEACHER Kordonna Ruback*



for educational purposes over and above the normal curriculum now in use.

And just as at the beginning, the children will be consulted as they were in choosing the name for their school. They'll probably be asked what little extra things they'd like to do in school such as making collections, working with science, art, American history or nature. School officials and the school board then will take up all the suggestions to determine how they'll use the grant.

What happened on that bright and sunny day in 1955? Thousands of people who greeted Disney and attended the afternoon and evening festivities probably have their own thousands of versions

but the main story revolves around how human and understanding a great figure like Walt Disney can be and was on that day when he visited tiny Tullytown borough.

John S. Linscott, Jr., supervisor of Tullytown School District, who came from his home state of Maine via school administration jobs in New Jersey and Texas to take over operation of the Tullytown schools in 1953, provided some of the highlights of the day as he remembered them.

Governor George S. Leader had designated September 24 as "Disney Day in Pennsylvania." The state's eyes were on little, historic Tullytown once visited by George Washington and

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*ON A TOUR of the new Walt Disney School in Levittown, Pa., Walt's hands are tightly held by Susan Jacobs and Sueann Lieberman. Others in photo are left to right front row, Frankie Stein, Bobby Israel, Linda Wurlpel and Jimmy Williford. Second row boy with glasses unidentified; John S. Linscott, Jr. School Supervisor; Boy in plaid jacket unidentified; Roger Witt, and Edward Paolletta.*





WALT DISNEY CHARACTERS adorn the wall of the wonderland theatre part of the new Walt Disney School, Levittown, Pa.

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where Buffalo Bill Cody once had a ranch in the area which now roughly comprises the Levittown Shopping Center and the community's Kenwood section.

Alighting from his train after long and thunderous greeting, Disney joined a motorcade for a trip to Main Street in "old Tullytown" to visit the years-old two-room school now "out-of-business" so to speak.

In the motorcade were dozens of officials who had ridden into the railroad station on the Disney train. Included was Burgess Fred Rentschler, School Board President Benjamin Kine and Edward Paollela, Tullytown School District Authority chairman. County and state school authorities, borough councilmen, school officials of surrounding communities and members of the clergy made up the parade line.

In due course the participants reached the new school, priced at \$629,000 in actual construction, in the Lakeside section of Levittown. New residents of the community and visitors who have read across the nation of the famous Walt Disney School, nowadays are directed to "look for the school with the big jet plane out front."

That big jet plane, a \$9,500,000 "addition" to the school, is a playtoy supplied by the U.S. Air Force for \$1. An extraordinary playground piece which probably gets more use than any other playground item in Levittown, it is a Douglas Skyrocket, a stress model of most of today's modern planes.

A cornerstone ceremony got under way with the Walt Disney School band comprised of pupils from grade two through six directed in a number of melodies by Kenneth Lesnik, now a local businessman identified with a music instruction school.

Inserted in the cornerstone was a box fabricated from steel made at the sprawling Fairless Works of United States Steel on the banks of the Delaware River in Falls Township.

Newspapers recording the building of the school, lists of all the school children and their teachers, the board officials and other officials present for the dedication went into the box as well.

Walt Disney switched his coonskin cap for a mason's cap and trowel for the quick cement job he contributed to the ceremony. Girl Scouts, Brownies, Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Camp Fire Girls and thousands of other children cheered Disney on with the job.

And then the thrill of the day and a lifetime for six children chosen for the task by classmates. Disney's hand was clasped by two pupils of six who led him on a grand tour of the school. The children were Billy Neal, Colleen Loth, Linda Worpel, Bobby Israel, Frankie Stein and Susan Jacobs.

One of their first stops was in a spacious, comfortable office with the neat pirate-type label on the door reading "Captain Hook." This is

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where "Scotty" Linscott, the well-liked school supervisor, makes his "bridge."

Intriguing to Disney were the names the children chose for the rooms. Strolling down a corridor, he was steered away from Mermaid Lagoon, the girls' lavatory, but towards Pirates' Cove, the more gentlemanly place.

Then they passed the door marked "Never, Never Land." Here Disney heard a simple story. Seems that when the school first opened on March 15, 1955, curious children were poking about and started to enter the door. A janitor spied them and as he hurriedly locked the boiler room door he cautioned them "never, never go in there."

Thoughtfully the pupils tagged the cafeteria as the Castle of Dreams, the gymnasium as Pleasure Island, the nurse's office as Pegleg Point but somehow they forgot the telephone booth in the front foyer. On dedication day some young hand with leftover paint and a shaky brush lettered the booth "Tinker Bell" and the moniker remains today.

Classrooms bear the names of Disney's many characters. He insisted on visiting each room and talking with every teacher despite the fact this tended to stretch out the day's program. In the Dumbo Room he joked with children and in the Bambi Room he told them bits of the Bambi story. In the Pluto Room he sat at the piano and played and sang songs from some

of his Disneyland movies. In the Donald Duck Room the children heard him imitate the duck's voice and it changed in the Mickey Mouse Room to the voices of some of the characters in that fellow's life.

Other quaint-named rooms visited by the animator were the Wendy, Snow White, Cinderella, Alice in Wonderland, Peter Pan and Davy Crockett Rooms. Not to be left out is the Little Theater which today is decorated with chalk drawings and lifesize Disney character cutouts and murals which the movie producer later furnished to the school.

The tour over, it was time to eat to the strains of the Burlington County Symphony String Quartet. After a hearty meal Walt received a certificate of honorary citizenship in Tullytown Borough, a gold key to the school and the number one "Honorary Graduate Diploma."

After seating him comfortably in the Little Theater, the entire school population took part in a 12-act program "Disneyland for Walt" in which they performed skits from his many motion picture and TV shows.

To close the day, citations were presented to him by representatives of the University of Pennsylvania and "The School Children of Bucks County." Colin Cho, the school's official greeter for Disney Day, bade the children's hero farewell, presenting him with a huge framed photograph of the Walt Disney School to hang in his busy office in Burbank, California.

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DISNEY DAY IN *Levittown*



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WALT DISNEY

WELC  
MR. DI



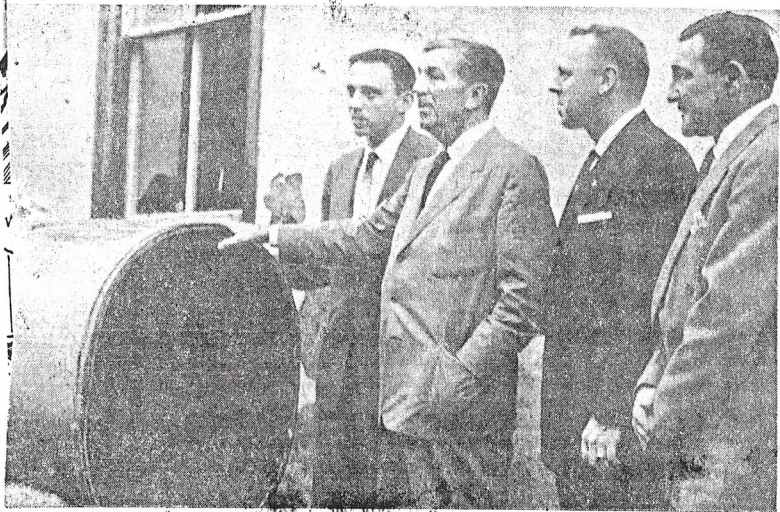
*Welcome . . . .*



Benjamin B. Kine, Tullytown school board president; Walt Disney, Collin Cho, Disney 6th grade president, and Ann Cheatham, Miss Levittown of 1955, stand on the speaker's platform at Levittown railroad station.



## *Look Over School*



Benjamin Kine, Walt Disney, Burgess Fred Rentschler and Edward Paollela, of the borough school authority, look over the old Main street school in Tullytown during a motorcade tour Saturday.

BOROUGH OF TULLYTOWN SCHOOL DISTRICT  
WALT DISNEY SCHOOL  
TULLYTOWN, PENNA.

**DEDICATION DAY AND EVENING PROGRAM**

Saturday, September 24, 1955

2:00 BOARD TRAIN AT PENN STATION

3:15 ARRIVE AT TULLYTOWN STATION

School Band at Station

Motorcade:

Car 1 -- Television Crew

Car 2 -- Walt Disney  
Colin Cho, Class President, Grade 6  
Fred Rentschler, Burgess  
Benjamin Kine, President of School Board  
Edward Paollela, Chairman of School Authority

Car 3 -- Patrick Brennan, Assemblyman, 2nd Assembly District  
William R. Davlin, Secretary of Commerce  
Karl King, U. S. Congressman  
Charles Boehm, Bucks County Supt. of Schools  
Dr. Ralph Swan, State Supt., Dept. of Public Instruction

Car 4 -- Board of School Directors:  
William Swangler, Vice President  
William Parr, Secretary  
Roger Witt, Treasurer  
George Mead, Member  
Edward Hale, Disney Productions

Car 5 -- Tullytown Borough Bucks County School Authority:  
Sidney Nechin, Vice Chairman  
Edward J. Kaiser, Secretary  
Richard W. Anderson, Ass't Secretary  
William H. Coontz, Solicitor  
Herbert Stein, Auditor

**Introduction**

Cathy Atkinson - Class Secretary, Grade 6

**Presentation**

Dr. Charles Boehm - Bucks County Supt. of Schools

**Presentation**

Dr. Ralph Swan - Acting State Supt. of Public Instruction

**Introduction**

Paul Zumoff - Class Vice President, Grade 5

**Presentation**

Benjamin B. Kine - President - Borough of Tullytown  
School District

**Remarks**

Walt Disney

**Laying of Corner Stone**

Walt Disney

John S. Carver - Architect

Edward Paolletta - Chairman, Bucks County School Authority

Colin Cho - Class President, Grade 6

Sara Aronowitz - President, Walt Disney Parent-Teachers Assoc.

**Flag Raising**

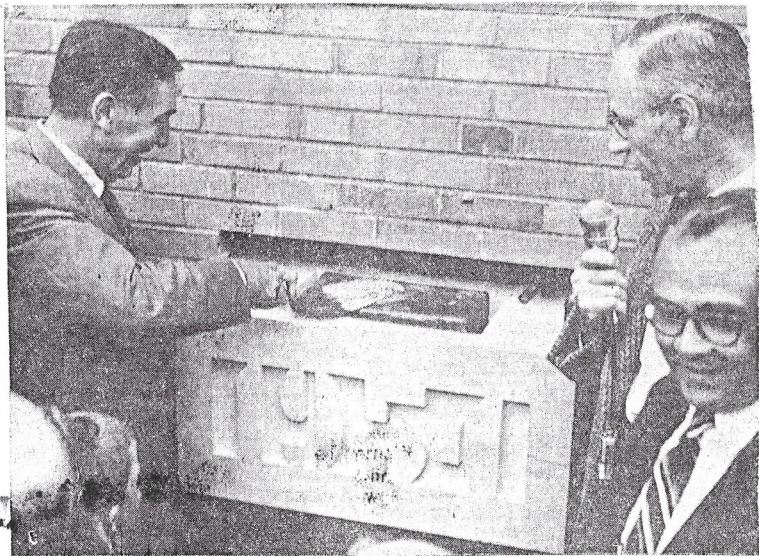
Walt Disney School Band

Girl Scouts - Brownie Troop #184

**Benediction**

Caren Cho - Class President, Grade 5

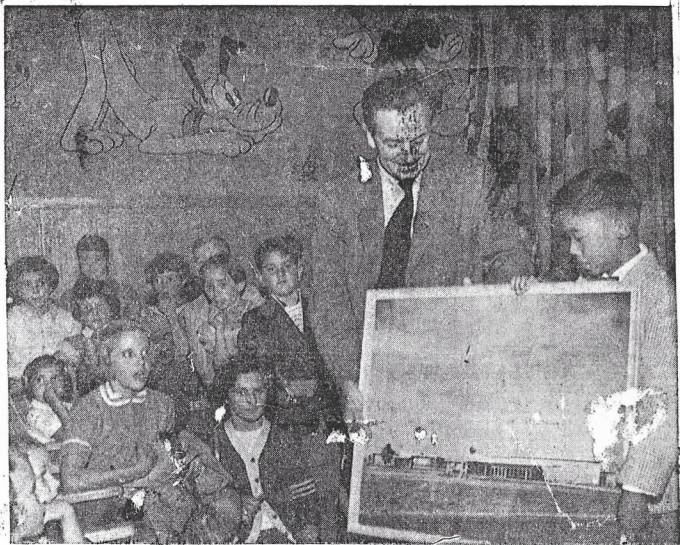
## *Cornerstone . . . and History*



Walt Disney places the first trowel of mortar over the cornerstone which bears mementos of the dedication ceremonies Saturday, including Disney characters which indirectly helped make the impressive ceremony a reality.

# Disney Day in Levittov

## *School Gift*



Collin Cho, 6th grade president, presents the school gift, a framed portrait of Disney school, to Walt Disney during a special program in the Little Theater.